



## **Equity Statement for SR22-3, To Approve the District of Columbia’s Amendment to the Compulsory Education and School Attendance Regulations**

The D.C. State Board of Education supports the Office of the State Superintendent’s (OSSE) proposed changes to Chapter 21 of Title 5-A of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (DCMR) for compulsory education and school attendance.

By shifting from measuring presence for purposes of attendance from being in attendance for 80 percent of the instructional day to 60 percent of the instructional day, this regulatory shift increases equity.

Transportation resources are not equitably distributed across geographical and socioeconomic difference. The shift to defining “present” to 60 percent of the instructional day better accounts for the inequitable distribution of resources across families in the District.

OSSE heard testimony that some students, once marked absent for the day for failing to arrive in time to meet the 80 percent mark, would choose to miss the entire day of school. Therefore, shifting the definition of “present” from 80 percent of the instructional day to 60 percent of the instructional day may encourage school attendance and discourage truancy because tardy students will have significantly more time to arrive at school without being marked absent for the day. Thus, the change will increase equity by helping encourage student attendance across student populations regardless of access to resources.

Student support teams (SSTs) in schools with high rates of absenteeism may be overburdened. This regulatory change will allow SSTs to focus resources on students who do not show up to school at all, rather than those that are tardy or leave early. Truant students who are not present for any part of the school day are most at risk. Thus, this shift will increase equity by allowing SSTs to better focus attendance intervention resources on the most at risk student populations.

In addition, by placing appropriate guardrails around distance learning, the proposed regulation will ensure equitable protections across learning modalities and better protect vulnerable students.

